

Statement of Governor Haley Barbour

House Votes on Medicaid Bill and Momentum Mississippi

“I am deeply disappointed that votes by the House of Representatives today have threatened the future of Medicaid and the future of job creation in Mississippi.

The House’s vote today to reject \$166 million in savings in Mississippi’s Medicaid program is a threat to Medicaid’s future. After weeks of negotiations, House and Senate conferees had agreed to a solution to increase Medicaid spending more slowly. This solution was critical to the future stability of this important program.

This legislation was also critical to keeping Medicaid solvent until the end of the fiscal year despite a \$268 million deficit. During our Special Session, bills were passed to take \$240 million from the Health Care Trust Fund with the expectation that \$28 million would be saved over the next few months by the passage of

today's legislation. That expectation is now in question, and Medicaid recipients are faced with yet another uncertainty.

The House's action today calls into question whether they are serious about controlling spending in Medicaid – a program that has doubled in cost in five years.

If their Medicaid failure were not disappointing enough, Mississippi's future job creation efforts also suffered another blow from the House today. Momentum Mississippi -- a critical job creation package created by Mississippi business, education and economic development leaders – was sent to an uncertain future today by the House. When given a second chance to approve this important legislation, the House refused.

Momentum Mississippi is critical in our efforts to make our state more competitive for new jobs from new industries and more supportive of new jobs from existing industries. Make no mistake, Mississippi economic development effort will be hampered without the tools in Momentum Mississippi.”

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